

Crossing

(The Gulf of Finland)

The fairy tale towers of Tallinn slip behind. As this grey sea rolls under fish scale skies and October winds outrun Winter's feral cuddle the Son of Kalev swims in the ferry's wake, head full of blood and vengeance but I know I'm not the fated shaman who sized his widowed mother, neither was it Andy or Ted.

The Gulf of Finland has an average width of 81 miles

We sit on the foredeck, strain our eyes toward Helsinki, talk about Led Zepp, The Clash, Van the Man and peer over the rail into the waters where a brown eyed girl sings among the fishes of her home at the bottom of Suomenlahti.

The Gulf of Finland has a surface area of 12,000 sq miles

Hiisi has sent his hornet to harry us, buzzing like a migraine, "My God, it's the size of a small bird! Imagine getting stung by that!" So we retire to the ballroom bar where they're playing Bingo on a big screen, announcing each number in Estonian and Finnish. We drink beer and Lonkero, and begin to feel the float.

The Gulf of Finland has a maximum depth of 377 ft

Out of nowhere Ted tells us the next number will be 49. Beneath us there are deep gullies that hold forgotten treasures: an eagle's egg, an iron helmet, a silver spear, oil fields, a Russian sub. The screen shows the number 49. Ted nods. We gasp, gobsmacked.

The Gulf of Finland has a low salinity, usually freezing between November and April

Andy turns 50 next month. Tomorrow in Juttatupa we will eat at a table where Stalin, Lenin and Trotsky planned the Revolution. Beneath the engine's hornet-hum I can hear a drowned girl singing from a room in the icy depths, of how she's built a nest of softness in the cold, dark ooze.